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[Signature]

within ~~the primary~~ that web page.

146. (currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 83, the association between at least one supplementary link and ~~the primary~~ its anchoring web page being implicitly derived from a selected attribute of ~~the primary~~ that web page.

147. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 83, having multiple supplementary links, with each supplementary link being ~~linked to~~ associated with a pixel or a point between pixels on the ~~primary~~ web page.

148. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 83, multiple supplementary links being ~~linked to~~ associated with an individual pixel or a point between pixels on the ~~primary~~ web page.

149. (previously presented) The method as defined in claim 70, the information processing means being a browser option.

REMARKS

There are now only three independent claims, 70, 83, and 98. They are distinguished from the prior art by specifically excluding key features which had been a necessary part of the prior art. In Claim 83, the complete anchor is excluded from the content of the associated web page. In Claim 70, only the features which make an anchor visible are excluded, and in Claim 98 only the features which make an anchor selectable are excluded. As these independent claims are distinct from all prior art, they stand on their own. Once the independent claims are allowed, all dependent claims become allowable. No dependent claim can be rejected on the grounds that they are an obvious combination of prior arts because the independent claims are not covered by the prior art.

In response to the specifics of your detailed actions, I respond as follows:
Actions 1 and 2 -- administrative items. No response required.

Actions 3, and 4 -- Claims 70, 83, and 98 were clarified. In the prior art, the several features of hypertext links are bundled together, and had been deemed necessarily inseparable. The gist of this present invention is that these features can be separated, and once separated several novel and useful aspects become apparent. The independent claims now specify the features of a hypertext link (as understood by the prior art) which are to be excluded from the features of a Supplementary Link.

Action 5 -- I had applied the adjectives "regular" and "normal" to the words "hypertext link" for emphasis to show that hypertext links are well known and well defined in the prior art, and to indicate the distinct separateness of Supplementary Links. These adjectives caused confusion and they have been removed as unnecessary.

Action 6 -- The additional words "information processing" have been added to Claim 83 to provide the proper antecedent basis.

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Action 7 -- Information only. No response required.

Action 8 -- Your reference to US 7032183 is irrelevant because it does not anticipate several key aspects of this invention. First and foremost, Supplementary Links as described by my invention are not hypertext links. In their patent, they contract the words "hypertext link" to the word "hyperlink". However, their meaning is synonymous. In all cases they are referring to hypertext links, complete with the false assumptions prevalent in the prior art, that a hypertext link is an inseparable unit. Their invention is a useful method of collecting together several web pages, and building a menu showing the hierarchical structure amongst those pages. Historically this type of structure had been called an index page, not a menu, but their meaning is clear. While their invention is useful in its own right, they did not use, or even hint at, supplementary links in their stated implementation. Neither can their system be used to implement the supplementary links as described by my invention.

In my invention, each supplementary link is unique by virtue of it being anchored to the single web page to which it has been associated. All supplementary links which have been associated with a web page are unique to that web page. This feature distinguishes supplementary links from the menu system described by Durham. In their system, their menu is descriptive of an over-arching structure within which the multiple pages of their web site are being logically interconnected to allow less hierarchical navigation, much like the way the traditional concepts of a Table of Contents or an Index allow us to find the right page within a printed book.

To further drive home my point that Supplementary Links are distinct from Durham, I will ask the following question. Could their system be used to implement the supplementary links stated in my claims? The answer is a resounding "NO, IT COULD NOT." Their pointers are anchorless. They are pointers, not links. As pointers, they lack the necessary "from" end of a link. Each supplementary link is a unique connection comprising both a "from" and a "to". Their system does not teach any way to create such a "from" end.

Supplementary links are distinct from hypertext links in that a key feature which the prior art had deemed was a necessary part of a hypertext link (specifically something to click on) is specifically excluded from a supplementary link.

Action 9 -- Information only. No response required.

Actions 10, 11, 12, and 13 -- These actions all have the same form. You incorrectly rejected my independent claims (70, 83, and 98) mistakenly claiming that they were anticipated by Durham. You then claim that combining Durham with a several of my dependent claims would have been obvious. Indeed, it may be obvious to combine Durham with my dependent claims. That does not change the fact that it cannot be obvious to combine supplementary links with my dependent claims.

Supplementary links were unanticipated in the prior art. For your argument of obviousness, it must be an obvious combination of two things already known in the prior art. Before this invention, supplementary links were unanticipated, and therefore it is impossible for it to be obvious to combine anything, even known arts, with anything that is unanticipated.

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Action 14 -- I believe I have answered all your stated grounds for objection.

The supplementary links described by this invention are a new primitive building block. In the prior art it was universally accepted that hypertext links were indivisible, and that any simplification rendered them useless. (What good is a hypertext link that you cannot see or click on?) This invention shows that hypertext links can be usefully simplified into supplementary links, so long as we also provide some means to expand them back into hypertext links when occasion requires it. Their usefulness stems from the very fact that they exist without affecting the look and feel of their web page.

As a building block, supplementary links can be used to construct many things. Some of the things which can be constructed with supplementary links will be new implementations of old things, including old things covered by some prior patent. That is an understood and acceptable limit on what will be allowed to be built with this new building block. However, this in no way limits the fact that supplementary links are themselves novel, useful, unobvious, and ultimately patentable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and arguments, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, requests the early issue of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Earl A. Culham



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